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## BOOK REVIEWS

IN CHARGE OF

M. E. CAMERON, R.N.

**THE CANCER PROBLEM.** By William Seaman Bainbridge, A.M., Sc.D., M.D., Professor of Surgery New York Polyclinic Medical School and Hospital; Surgeon and Secretary of Committee of Scientific Research, New York Skin and Cancer Hospital; Consulting Surgeon Manhattan State Hospital, Ward's Island; Honorary President First International Congress for the Study of Tumors and Cancers, Heidelberg, 1906. The Macmillan Company, New York. Price \$4.

While it makes no claim to being the last word on cancer, this book may very well assert itself to be the epitome of the present day knowledge of what it very justly terms the Cancer Problem.

Out of masses of more or less fallacious suggestions for the better handling of what is justly considered to be one of the greatest devastating scourges of civilization, Dr. Bainbridge selects his line of attack and disposing of many of the time-honored beliefs in heredity and contagion, many methods of treatment which from time to time have been heralded as complete cures, outlines a campaign of education, which includes the medical profession as well as laymen. The importance of early diagnosis is urged upon the profession and the gravity of neglecting to seek advice concerning anything in the nature of a tumor, birthmark, etc., is made plain to the laity.

Unlike tuberculosis, cancer is still wrapped in mystery. No scientist has been able so far to discover the essential cause of the disease. Predisposing causes are to be looked for in sources of chronic irritation and acute trauma, also in benign neoplasms which are subjected to irritation. Under this head we find some interesting information concerning the natives of Kashmir who carry fire baskets beneath their clothing for warmth.

There is considerable space devoted to the so-called cancer cures, many of which call for very great credulity. Physiotherapy includes heat, light, electricity and radioactivity. Biotherapy includes the many sera, toxins, vaccines. But the real cure seems to lie in operation and in no other field of surgery is the technic so varied, including the "starvation ligature," and much plastic work.

The education of the layman is to be carried along lines which make

for "the establishment of a spirit of confidence in, and willingness to coöperate with, the medical profession, in the prevention of cancer by intelligent attention to the general health and to the special conditions which predispose to the development of the disease;" also "the development of keener discrimination in the selection of a physician or surgeon." The author deplores the lack of discrimination in a public which willingly follows the teaching of quackery and states, in no measured terms, the danger involved. One wonders why a witless public is not protected by punitive laws from such grave menace.

The book closes with a bibliography of over twelve hundred works on cancer, including history, etiology, treatment, etc.

SELECTED ADDRESSES. By James Tyson, M.D., LL.D., Professor of Medicine Emeritus, University of Pennsylvania. P. Blakiston's Son and Co., Philadelphia. Price \$1.75.

Eighteen short articles addressed in the dedication to "the numerous physicians who, from time to time, have patiently sat under instruction," on subjects relating to Education, Biography, Travel, etc., and including one entitled *The Trained Nurse*. This paper may or may not meet with approval from the readers of *THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF NURSING*. It places a higher value on experience than is usual among those who estimate the qualities which a nurse brings to her profession. Indeed, it goes further and states that "no nurse at her graduation is worth twenty-five dollars a week." This is a reversal of popular opinion, for the pet grievance of the elderly nurse is that her experience counts for nothing at all and that the public wants the new nurse fresh from her training.

There is much advice and counsel given to the young nurse in the kindest possible spirit, and there is, alas, much that has been said by good, kind, worthy members of the medical profession to nurses about to graduate, not once, but hundreds of times. Perhaps we all need it. Perhaps the first time a nurse hears it she does listen, mark, learn, and inwardly digest, but there comes a time when we turn from it with a kind of mental nausea.

The other papers are more interesting reading. Some are biographical and some take up subjects of particular interest to the medical fraternity, as *Hospital Organization*, *Physician's Vacation*, *Review of the Progress of Medicine during the Half Century, 1863-1913*, and so on.

These notes from the experience of a man whose profession led him to the busiest and most exacting paths of life and with a desire and taste for expressing in writing the impressions he had received, are well worth reading.